THE

WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

For MONDAY, March 3, 1800.

Anecdotes of the late Daniel Dancer, commonly called the Miſer of Harrow Weal Common.

(Continued from Page 156.)

ON theſe occaſions it was cuſtomary with the houſe-breakers to terrify him into a diſcovery of his more valuable property; and they are ſaid to have actually ſuſpended him by the neck ſeveral times before they could extort a confeſſion where it was depoſited.

At length Daniel bethought himſelf of a mode of preventing their viſits, and puniſhing their temerity. After faſtening his rotten door on the inſide, in the beſt manner poſſible, he determined never to enter the houſe again through that aperture. Accordingly, he procured a ſhort ladder, always aſcended by its means, and pulling it in after him, took refuge in his miſerable apartment, where he literally reſembled Robinſon Cruſoe, ſhut up in his little garriſon.

But not deeming this ſufficient, he actually dug a hole, or what military men term a *trou de loup*, before the entrance, which he covered over with looſe ſtraw in ſuch a manner as to ſecure the principal approach towards his caſtle, and entrap any incautious aſſailant, who might have the temerity to invade his darling property. After exhibiting this ſpecimen of his talents as an engineer, the modern Midas ſeems to have ſlept in ſafety amidſt his gold.*

* When hard puſhed, he is ſaid to have taken refuge in a well in the yard.

His ſiſter, who lived along with him for many years, at length died, and left a conſiderable ſum of money behind her, which went towards the increaſe of his wealth, and ſerved rather to ſtimulate than diminiſh his avarice. About this time commenced his acquaintance with the Tempeſt family, which, while it ſoothed his pride, alleviated the ſufferings and ſorrows of his declining age. Lady Tempeſt, who happened to live in his neighbourhood, compaſſionating the ſituation of Miſs Dancer, took her into her houſe during her laſt illneſs, and treated her with uncommon kindneſs. But the diſeaſe, which, dreadful to relate, is ſuppoſed to have proceeded originally from inanition, proved mortal, and rendered all the good old lady's care ineffectual.

Although Daniel never evinced any affection for his ſiſter, he determined to bury her in ſuch a manner as ſhould not diſgrace the family. He accordingly contracted with an undertaker, who agreed to take timber in return for a coffin, as Mr. Dancer had no idea of uſing the precious metals as a vehicle of exchange: He, however, could not be prevailed upon to purchaſe proper mourning for himſelf; yet, in conſequence of the entreaty of his neighbours, he unbound the hay-bands with which his legs were uſually covered, and drew on a ſecond-hand pair of black worſted ſtockings. His coat was of whitiſh-brown colour; his waiſtcoat had been black about the middle of the century; and the immediate covering to his head, which ſeemed to have been taken from Mr. Elwes's wiggery, and to have deſcended to Daniel as an heir loom, gave a groteſque appearance to the perſon of a chief mourner, but too well calculated to provoke mirth. This, indeed, was increaſed by the ſlipping of his horſe's girth at the place of burial; in conſequence of which the rider, to the great diverſion of ſome of the Harrow boys who attended, was precipitated into the grave!

The latter part of Daniel's life was, however, meliorated by the humanity and good nature of his worthy and reſpectable neighbour.

Lady Tempeſt preſented him with a bed, and at length actually prevailed upon him to throw away the ſack in which he had ſlept for years. Being a ſworn enemy to extravagance, he was careful to exceſs of the property of another. He could ſcarcely be prevailed upon, it is ſaid, to touch a joint. He delighted in fragments and cruſts; and, while indulging himſelf in theſe luxuries, muttered execrations againſt the devouring gluttony of modern times. He alſo evinced, on this occaſion, a conſiderable portion of that low

cunning

cunning ſo common in illiterate perſons; for he pretended to pay his addreſſes to the cook, in an honourable way, with a view of keeping in favour with her; and when it was evident that ſhe had diſcovered his intentions to proceed from what is termed cupboard love, he endeavoured to impoſe on her a ſecond time, by promiſing to remember her in his will!

To a brother, ſtill alive, who keeps ſheep on the ſame common, and rivals the late Daniel in penury and almoſt in wealth, he always manifeſted the utmoſt averſion; to his niece, however, he once preſented a guinea on the birth of a daughter: But even here he made a hard bargain, for the gift was conditional—ſhe was either to name the child Nancy, after his mother, or forfeit the whole ſum.

To the honour of Mr. Dancer, however, he poſſeſſed one virtue, and that too not a very common one in this world—gratitude. Accordingly, ſome time before his death, he made a will, and ſurrendered his copyhold eſtates to the diſpoſition he had made; the will and ſurrender were both in favour of his benefactreſs, Lady Tempeſt.

The evening before his death he diſpatched a meſſenger, in whom he could confide, requeſting to ſee her Ladyſhip; and, on being gratified in this particular, he expreſſed great ſatisfaction. Finding himſelf a little better, his attachment to the only thing he reſpected, more than that Lady, recurred, and that too with ſuch violence, that although his hand was ſcarcely able to perform its functions, he took hold of his teſtament, which he had intended to have preſented to her, and replaced it once more in his boſom.

Next morning, however, perceiving his end to be faſt approaching, he actually conſided this paper, according to his original determination; and having now reſigned, as it were, all title to that adored wealth, which he conſidered as his "heart's blood," he ſoon after gave up the ghoſt, and was buried in the church-yard of his pariſh (Harrow,) by his own particular deſire.

Thus lived, and thus died, at the age of 78, on September 4, 1794, Daniel Dancer, a true diſciple of the Elwes's ſchool, the rigours of which he practiſed to a far greater degree than even his maſter. In conſequence of a very common miſtake of the means for the end, he deprived himſelf not only of what are termed the pleaſures but even of the neceſſaries of life. At times, however, he would lament that he did not make a better uſe of his riches, and was once heard to regret that he had not, according to his original intention, ſet up a whiſkey, which in his opinion was the *ne plus ultra*

of gentility. On another occaſion, upon receiving two-pence for a pint of beer from a Deputy Commiſſary, who was about to pay him five hundred pounds for hay, during the laſt war, and had miſtaken him for one of 'Squre Dancer's ſervants, he bridled up, and ſaid that he intended ſoon to become a gentleman himſelf!

In his miſerable habitation were found ſome hundred weight of waſte paper, the collection of half a century, and two or three tons of old iron, conſiſting of nails, horſe ſhoes, &c. which he had picked up.

On the ground floor ſeveral pieces of foreign gold and ſilver were dug up, and ſome coins, among which were a crown and a ſhilling of the Engliſh Commonwealth, both of which, by the generoſity of a friend, are now in the poſſeſſion of the writer of this article.

Had it not been for the perpetual exerciſe of his maſter-paſſion, Daniel Dancer might have been a credit to his family, and an ornament to ſociety. He poſſeſſed the ſeeds of many admirable qualities, and exhibited frequent marks of ſtrong, nervous, good ſenſe, unpoliſhed indeed by commerce with the world, but at the ſame time unſophiſticated by its vices, or its follies.

Both he and his father, during a ſeries of more than ſixty years, had allowed themſelves two jubilee days in the year: Theſe were their feſtivals, and they enjoyed them, for there was good cheer to be had without expence. The periods alluded to occurred in April and October, at Sir John Ruſhout's Court Baron for the manor of Harrow. As head tenants they conſtantly attended; and it was obſerved by all the ſuitors, that if the Dancers ſtarved at home, they ate moſt voraciouſly abroad. On theſe occaſions Daniel diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his droll ſayings; and, whenever any attempt was made to ridicule, burleſque, or paſs a joke upon him (which was invariably the caſe,) the wit and eccentricity of his replies ſoon put his antagoniſts to ſilence.

No man had more of the true Engliſhman about him, at leaſt ſo far as concerned the defence of his rights and privileges, than Mr. Dancer. He was a ſecond Hampden in this reſpect; for, during the whole of his life, he would never permit any infringements on Harrow Weal Common. Whenever an encroachment took place, without any reſpect to rank or fortune, Daniel inſtantly headed the villagers, and abated the nuiſance. This made him extremely popular.

(To be continued.)

Account

Account of the Siege of Londonderry, in Ireland, in July, 1689.

(Concluded from Page 144.)

THE garriſon of Derry ſtill continued to defeat all the attempts of their beſiegers, and to harraſs them by ſucceſsful ſallies. But they were ſoon threatened with more terrible enemies, diſeaſe and famine. The heats of ſummer proved even peſtilential to men fatigued and confined, and their ſcanty and unwholeſome diet enflamed their diſorders. In the heavineſs of their affliction, and their melancholy forebodings, they diſcovered in Lake Foyle thirty ſhips, which they doubted not had been ſent to their relief from England. Theſe indeed contained troops, arms, ammunition, and proviſions, under the command of Kirk; but Kirk was too much hardened againſt the diſtreſſes of his fellow-creatures to make any hazardous attempt in favour of the garriſon. He was alarmed at the magnificent accounts of the force and diſpoſitions of an enemy who were caſt into conſternation at his appearance. He heſitated, and returned no cheerful anſwer to the ſignals of the beſieged. The enemy, encouraged by this irreſolution, prepared to oppoſe his paſſage. Their batteries were planted, and their forces ranged on each ſide the lake where it grew narrow towards the city, and from two oppoſite forts they ſtretched a boom acroſs the water, formed of ſtrong timber joined by iron chains and ſtrengthened by thick cables*. The fleet, to which the garriſon looked for relief, ſet ſail and diſappeared.

With great difficulty, and after repeated diſappointments, they at length received the afflicting intelligence from Kirk, that as he found it impoſſible to force a paſſage by the river for his ſtores and victuals, he had ſailed round to Lake Swilly, if by any means he might give ſome diverſion to the enemy, and ſend ſupplies to the proteſtant forces collected at Enniſkillen. He comforted them, at the ſame time, with an aſſurance that he would ſtill relieve them; that more forces were hourly expected from England; that both there and in Scotland affairs were entirely favourable to the new Government; that by the intelligence he had gained, the beſiegers could

* It is remarkable that the perſon who conſtructed this boom, by which the ſiege was protracted, was the grandfather of the late unfortunate Coigley, who was executed at Maidſtone, June, 1798, for high treaſon.

could not long continue to inveſt them; adviſing them at the ſame time, "To be good huſbands of their proviſions." From this advice they drew a melancholy preſage of all their future ſufferings.

Every day the garriſon was leſſened by diſeaſe, and the wretched ſurvivors more and more enfeebled by fatigue and hunger. Baker, one of their Governors, died; they choſe an officer of the name of Mitcheburne to ſucceed him. When numbers of them were ſcarcely able to ſupport their arms, they threatened death to any who ſhould mention a ſurrender. General Hamilton endeavoured to move them by perſuaſion; they reproached him with his own treachery. Roſen, who was ſent to command the ſiege and conducted it with vigour and addreſs, thundered out dreadful menaces againſt them; and thus by convincing them that no mercy was to be expected, confirmed their reſolution. Outrageous at this obſtinacy, he declared, that if the town were not ſurrendered by the firſt day of July, all of their faction through the whole country to Ballyſhannon, Charlemont, Belfaſt, Inniſowen, protected and unprotected alike, ſhould be given up to plunder, and driven under their walls, there to periſh, unleſs relieved by a ſurrender of the town.

The appointed day arrived, but the garriſon continued their defence. On the next morning a confuſed multitude was ſeen hurrying towards the walls. At a diſtance they were miſtaken for enemies; the garriſon fired on them, but happily without any damage to the thouſands of miſerable proteſtants, of all ages and conditions, infirm, old, young, women, infants, and goaded on by ſoldiers whoſe ears were tortured with their ſhrieks, and who executed their hideous orders with tears. The afflicted ſpectacle tranſported the garriſon to fury. Numbers of the wretched ſufferers thus driven to periſh beneath their walls, conjured them with bended knees and lifted hands, by no means to conſider their diſtreſs, but to defend their lives bravely againſt an enemy who ſought to involve them all in one common ſlaughter! A gallows was now erected in view of the beſiegers; they were aſſured, that all the priſoners taken by the garriſon ſhould be inſtantly executed, unleſs their friends were allowed to depart. Confeſſors were even admitted to prepare them for death; but Roſen was ſtill unmoved. Happily the intelligence of his barbarous intentions flew to Dublin. The proteſtant Biſhop of Meath remonſtrated to James; he anſwered, that he had already ordered theſe captives to be releaſed, obſerving, that ſuch ſeverities were uſual in foreign

ſervice, however ſhocking to his ſubjects. Thoſe who ſurvived a confinement of almoſt three days without ſuſtenance or ſhelter, were thus permitted to return to their habitations, where the ravages of the ſoldiery had left them no means of comfort. Some of their ableſt men were ſtolen into the town, and five hundred uſeleſs people crowded among them, and paſſed undiſcovered, notwithſtanding the vigilance of the enemy.

The garriſon, with a confirmed horror of the beſiegers, continued their obſtinate defence, and even made deſperate and ſucceſsful ſallies when they were too much weakened by hunger to purſue their advantage. The fleſh of horſes, dogs, and vermin, hides, tallow, and other nauſeous ſubſtances, were purchaſed at extravagant prices, and eagerly devoured. Even ſuch miſerable reſources began to fail, and no means of ſuſtenance could be found for more than two days. Still the languid and ghaſtly crowds liſtened to the exhortations of Walker; ſtill he aſſured them from the pulpit that the Almighty would grant them a deliverance. While their minds were yet warm with his harangue, delivered with all the eagerneſs of a man inſpired, they diſcovered three ſhips in the Lake making way to the town. Kirk, who had abandoned them from the 13th day of June to the 30th of July, at length thought fit, in their extreme diſtreſs, to make an hazardous attempt to relieve them; an attempt which he might have made with leſs danger at the moment of his arrival, and which poſſibly might ſtill have been deferred, had he not received ſome intimations of a treaty for ſurrendering. Two ſhips laden with proviſions, and conveyed by the Dartmouth frigate, advanced in view both of the garriſon and the beſiegers. On this intereſting object they fixed their eyes in all the earneſtneſs of ſuſpence and expectation. The enemy, from their batteries, from their muſketry, thundered furiouſly on the ſhips, which returned their fire with ſpirit. The foremoſt of the victuallers ſtruck rapidly againſt the boom, and broke it, but rebounding with violence, ran a-ground. The enemy burſt inſtantly into ſhouts of joy, and prepared to board her; on the crowded walls the garriſon ſtood ſtupified by deſpair. The veſſel fired her guns, was extricated by the ſhock, and floated. She paſſed the boom, and was followed by her companions. The town was relieved, and the enemy retired.

Of ſeven thouſand five hundred men regimented in Derry, four thouſand three hundred only remained to be witneſſes of their deliverance; and of theſe more than one thouſand were

were incapable of ſervice. The wretched ſpectres had ſcarcely taſted food, when they had the hardineſs to march in queſt of the enemy; and ſome few men were loſt by adventuring too boldly on their rear-guard. The enemy retired in vexation to Strabane, having loſt eight thouſand men by the ſword and by various diſorders, in a ſiege of one hundred and five days.

The gallant Walker was, unfortunately, killed the next year at the battle of the Boyne, fighting for William, who came to preſerve the religion and liberties of his country.

Curious Account of the Battle of the Apes.

TAVERNIER, in his journey from Maſſipatan to Gaudicot, a town and fortreſs in the Carnatic, give us the following ſingular relation:

After paſſing ſeven leagues we came to Oudicot. This day's journey was through a flat and ſandy country, and on either ſide of the road nothing is to be ſeen but immenſe foreſts of bamboo, a ſort of cane, the height of which rivals our loftieſt foreſt trees, and ſo thickly planted by the hand of nature, that it is abſolutely impoſſible to penetrate them. Theſe bamboo foreſts are ſwarming with almoſt incredible multitudes of apes, who, like their civilized brethren*, take upon them to partition the earth out among themſelves, and are natural, I had almoſt ſaid, ſworn enemies to each other. Thoſe who reſide on one ſide of the park have no commerce or connection with thoſe who reſide upon the other, and ſhould any one dare to paſs the line of demarkation, he would run the moſt imminent riſque of being inſtantly ſtrangled.

At Palicat, the Governor propoſed, that as we paſſed betwixt theſe jealous foes, we ſhould divert ourſelves by ſetting them together by the ears. The method of doing it is this; through the whole extent of this country, from league to league, the roads are croſſed with gates and barriers, and guards are ſtationed at each of them, to take account and give information of every one that paſſes or repaſſes them, ſo that the traveller here purſues his rout in perfect ſecurity, and might, if he thought proper, carry his purſe expoſed in his hand. At each of theſe ſtations ſtores of rice are laid up

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* Lord Monboddo ſuppoſes mankind to be a ſpecies of improved cultivated Ourang Outangs.

for the accommodation of the paſſenger; and when he feels inclined to amuſe himſelf with a battle, he diſpoſes five or ſix baſkets of rice at forty or fifty paces diſtance from each other, along the road, and by the ſide of each of them five or ſix truncheons, of about two feet in length, and of the ſize of a large walking ſtaff. The baſkets being thus arranged and uncovered, every one retires to ſome little diſtance, and forthwith the apes, who have been watching the proceſs, are ſeen haſtening down from the ſummits of the bamboos, and ſcampering along the neutral ground, toward the rice; there, however meeting their adverſaries haſtening alſo toward the ſame point, no one will give up the prize, and no one dares to touch it; in this ſtate of ſuſpenſe they continue for perhaps half an hour, grinning and ſhewing their teeth at each other, now facing this way, now facing that, and equally afraid to commence the onſet; at length ſome daring female, with perhaps her little one in her arms, which ſhe carries as a nurſe carries her infant, daſhes upon the baſket and plunges her head into it. In an inſtant the adverſe males ruſh forward and ſeize her with their teeth, her friends ſupport her, and the charge being ſounded by her ſcreams, every one ſeizes the truncheon which is next him, and a furious conflict enſues; the weaker party are, ere long, of courſe compelled to change their poſition, and retire with broken heads and bruiſed ſhoulders into their own territory, and the victors remaining maſters of the field, eat the rice at leiſure.

We muſt not however forget to add, that when they have gorged themſelves to the utmoſt capacity of their ſtomachs, they then, with all the generoſity of a conqueror, permit the females of the vanquiſhed to come and conſume their offals!

CAUTION AGAINST SOWING DISCOLOURED BARLEY.

To the PRINTERS.

SIR, *Harleſton, February* 10.

OUT of a coomb of diſcoloured barley, more than two buſhels will not, in moſt inſtances, work on the malting floor. In all the diſcoloured barleys, the proportion which will not work is very great. Though the diſcoloured barleys work better now than they did at the beginning of the malting ſeaſon, and though it is probable they will ſtill further improve as the ſpring advances, I do not think they

can be relied upon for ſeed, as they do not vegetate better in the ground than they do on the floor. By kiln drying diſcoloured barleys with a very moderate heat, ſo as only to expel the moiſture not common to them, four fifths, ſpeaking generally, may be made to work on the floor, or grow in the ground, beſides the further advantage, that they vegetate regularly together,

I adviſe the farmers to ſow bright barley, if they have it, if not kiln dried, which I know from experiments will vegetate: or dried, by expoſure to the ſun in the ſpring, which may probably produce the ſame effect as kiln drying. I would earneſtly recommend to thoſe who have not bright barley, to ſow a ſmall quantity of what they reſerve for ſeed, that they may aſcertain whether it will grow or not, before they ſow their general crop. If the farmers will look at their ſtubbles, they muſt be convinced that the diſcoloured barleys would not vegetate in the ſtate in which they were harveſted; and that they will not even now, as they come from the flail, I pledge myſelf to be a fact, as a maltſter.

JOHN KERRICH.

CHARACTER *of* M. DE MIRABEAU.

By M. BERTRAND.

EARLY plunged by the violence of his paſſions, and by the uncommon vigour of his conſtitution, into all manner of exceſs, Mirabeau had ſhaken off the yoke of principles, and had ſubſtituted in their place ſyſtems ever dependent, as to his conduct, on the ſordid calculations of intereſt. His long and frequent impriſonments had conſiderably ſoured and hardened his diſpoſition, and in the courſe of them he had alſo acquired the habit of reflecting deeply, of conſidering a queſtion under all its points of view, and of ſupporting with equal ſtrength the affirmative or negative; whence that readineſs, that ſuperiority in reply, which gave him an immenſe advantage over all his opponents. Unfortunately, the beſt cauſe was always in his opinion that for which he was beſt paid, and his eloquence at the ſervice of the higheſt bidder.

He has been unjuſtly accuſed of cowardice; on ſeveral occaſions, when his life only was at ſtake, he has given unequivocal proofs of courage. But he was often daſtardly through avarice or vanity: There was no inſult, however

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ſerious, which he could not bear when he had a large ſum to receive, or an important ſpeech to deliver in the Aſſembly next day; and it ſeldom happened but that one or other of theſe was the caſe. Being a royaliſt on conviction, he would have ſupported the throne very powerfully, had not M. Neckar ſcrupled to purchaſe his ſervices; and it was not till he refuſed them, that he offered them to the democratic party, who paid much more for them than he would have got from the court.

Mirabeau was far from being the author of all the ſpeeches he delivered from the tribune. His attendance at the Aſſembly, and the parties of pleaſure, or rather of immoderate debauch, in which he was perpetually engaged, left him no time to write them, even had his head been ſufficiently at liberty to compoſe them. He had at command a certain number of writers of more wit than fortune, who, flattered by his patronage, encouraged by his promiſes, and aſſiſted at times by trifling ſums from his purſe, did themſelves the honour of working for him. He received them at his houſe at different hours, and employed them all unknown to one another, telling each, under the ſeal of ſecrecy, that he purpoſed to make a motion of ſuch a nature, but that he had ſo little time to beſtow upon thinking of it, that it would be doing him a real friendſhip to give him ſome ideas, ſome notes which he might make uſe of, and that he had thought of him for ſuch aſſiſtance. There was not one of them but went inſtantly to work as hard as he could, to juſtify the confidence of a man ſo celebrated as Mirabeau.

When they had all ſent in their work, he ſelected the beſt paſſages of each, forming a whole out of them, which he arranged and enriched in his manner with ſome pompous phraſes, and then ſet out for the Aſſembly. His fellow-labourers, who got there before him, recognized each the particular paſſage he had furniſhed him with, admired in ſecret the advantage he had drawn from it, and never doubted that all the reſt of the ſpeech was his own compoſition: they wondered at his being able to produce ſo fine an oration in ſo ſhort a time, and left the hall, convinced that no man had more talents than Mirabeau. And there is no doubt in fact that he was very able, without the aſſiſtance of any body, to make as good ſpeeches as thoſe he thus patched up: but he had a rarer talent, and the moſt uſeful to a ſtateſman, that of appreciating the talents of others, and extracting the greateſt poſſible advantage from them. Charlemagne could hardly ſign his name, and Cardinal Richelieu was an indifferent

writer; yet the one was the greateſt King, and the other the ableſt miniſter France ever had.

ON ENGLISH VERSE.

RHYME, we have often been told, is a modern invention; though, if that was a crime, it might perhaps be proved to be not ſo very modern neither. It is reckoned a barbarous one by ſome pedants; who finding, I ſuppoſe, by the opinion of better judges than themſelves, that it is abominable in Greek and Latin, conclude that it muſt not be leſs ſo in French and Engliſh. The contrary is evident to every one that has ears, and dares think for himſelf; for in Engliſh, rhyme is capable of much harmony; and the French can have no verſification without it. But ſome people, who ought to know better, ſeem to make no allowance for the original difference between one language and another; and are ready to quarrel with the Engliſh as a barbarous language, becauſe it is not Latin or Greek. They do not conſider, that every language has powers and graces peculiar to itſelf; and that what is becoming in one would be quite ridiculous in another. Of this it is ſufficient to produce one obvious example: The tranſpoſition of words, which gives ſuch a grace and ſpirit to the Greek and Latin languages, and without which they would become deteſtably flat and inſipid, does not at all ſuit the genius of the Engliſh; except ſometimes in poetry: And, by the way, I am afraid there are too many ungraceful tranſpoſitions current among our Engliſh poets.

But it is not only a few obſcure pedants, who are thus diſſatisfied with their mother tongue; and would be glad for its improvement to torture it from its native ſhape, ſome into Latin and others into French; for attempts of this kind have actually been made by men of ſuperior note. Sir Philip Sidney, who, notwithſtanding his affected manner, muſt be allowed to have poſſeſſed a great ſhare of genius, would every now and then ſpur up his gallant Engliſh into a moſt unbecoming ridiculous trot after the Greek and Latin hexameters. It is certainly impoſſible to introduce the Greek and Latin meaſures into Engliſh poetry with any ſucceſs; yet Sir Philip was fond of this project, and purſued it with a ſtrange obſtinacy. He recommended it to Spenſer; but Spenſer had too true an ear to reliſh ſuch awkward unnatural verſification, or countenance it by his example. At leaſt

there

there is nothing remaining of him to ſhow that he ever practiſed it. There have been attempts made ſince to the ſame purpoſe by Milton and ſome later authors. But there never was any thing ſeen ſo ungraceful or ſo deſpicably pedantic as all eſſays of that kind which have hitherto appeared. I do not know that it has ever yet been tried, except by Milton in ſome parts of his Samſon; but of all the Greek or Latin meaſures, the Iambic ſeems the moſt capable of being adopted into the Engliſh poetry.

I have either heard or read, that a poet of the eighteenth century, whom I ſhall not name, becauſe I am not perfectly ſure of the fact, pretended to ſome ſecrets in verſification, which he did not chooſe to communicate. If it was ſo, it ſhowed a jealouſy unworthy of ſo great a maſter of numbers: He might ſafely enough, for his own ſuperiority, have publiſhed thoſe ſecrets, whatever they were; for it is impoſſible they could ever be of much uſe. He could eaſily adviſe you to vary your pauſes, and tell you which are the moſt graceful: But theſe, and all ſuch precepts, are nothing to the purpoſe; a good ear will naturally produce harmony without the leaſt regard or attention to rules; and there is no cure for a bad one. The only way to improve the ear, whether good or bad, is to accuſtom it to the moſt harmonious writing.

Blank verſe admits of a greater variety of pauſes than rhyme, and is partly for that reaſon the fitteſt for works of any conſiderable length. But in Engliſh poetry, I queſtion whether it is poſſible, with any ſucceſs, to write odes, epiſtles, elegies, paſtorals, or ſatires, without rhyme. And it happens luckily, that in theſe ſhort pieces the ear has not time to be tired with the return of the chimes; which, in my humble opinion, had better ſometimes play a little falſe to one another, than be for ever ſcrupulouſly exact: provided ſuch licences never ſhock the ear.

It does not require a very exquiſite ear to write two ſmooth, or even harmonious lines running; yet in rhyme, a poet, who is always very careful to poliſh his couplet, may paſs with the multitude for a great maſter in verſification. But as long as his harmony is confined within ſuch narrow bounds, he writes but like a ſchool-boy, who keeps in the line only with the help of ruled paper.

Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope took offence, one does not know why, at the triplet, and very rarely condeſcended to admit it into their verſe. It is true, it had been uſed to a nauſeous exceſs by ſome taſteleſs writers; and Mr. Pope's own imi-

tation

tation of Rocheſter might juſtly enough give him a diſguſt to the triplet for his whole life. Yet it contributes not a little to the grace of Dryden's verſification: and I can ſee no reaſon why it ſhould be prohibited now; as it gives a variety to the numbers which in rhyme is ſufficiently limited to require ſuch a help.

It does not ſeem quite foreign to the preſent ſubject to take ſome notice of Voltaire, who after having given it as his opinion, that Mr. Pope is the moſt harmonious of all the Engliſh poets, adds, with a very plauſible aſſurance, that he has reduced the ſharp hiſſings of the Engliſh trumpet to the ſweet ſounds of the flute. It is no great wonder, that one who is apt to write much at random, ſhould preſume to talk ſo contemptuouſly of a manly, and elegant, and harmonious language, with which he plainly appears to have but a very ſuperficial acquaintance. But who ever talked before of the *hiſſings* of a *trumpet*, or of *ſharp hiſſings?* We have all heard of the *hoarſe* trumpet, but the *hiſſing* trumpet is an inſtrument we are not yet acquainted with. However, to paſs theſe little improprieties, this compliment to Pope ſhews how well our critic is qualified to pronounce ſentence upon the Engliſh poets. No one is more ſenſible than I am of Mr. Pope's merit; but his blindeſt admirer might ſtartle at the preference beſtowed upon him here. For, not to mention the great names of Spenſer, Shakeſpeare, and Milton, upon ſuch an occaſion, let us only compare Pope in this point of view, with a writer upon whom, as they ſay, he formed himſelf, and whom not only in his own opinion, but in that of many others, he is thought to have excelled in the art of verſifying. It is almoſt needleſs, after this, to ſay I mean Dryden, whoſe verſification I take to be the moſt muſical that has yet appeared in rhyme. Round, ſweet, pompous, ſpirited, and various; it flows with ſuch a happy volubility, ſuch animated and maſterly negligence, as I am afraid will not ſoon be excelled.

Cumberſome and extravagant Dreſſes of the Men, in the Time of Henry IV.

[From Strutt's View of the Dreſs and Habits of the People of England.]

HENRY IV. ſoon after his acceſſion to the throne, revived the ſumptuary ſtatutes of Edward III. but, if

they had then been ſtrenuouſly carried into execution, Thomas Occliff, who wrote in the reign of that monarch, would not have had the occaſion of complaint which he exhibits againſt the extravagance of dreſs exiſtent in his time. This poet, after enumerating many things requiring amendment, comes to the ſubject of apparel; "and this," ſays he, "in my thinking, is an evil, to ſee one walking in gownes of ſcarlet twelve yards wide, with ſleeves reaching to the ground, and lined with fur, worth twenty pounds, or more; at the ſame time, if he had only been maſter of what he paid for, he would not have had enough to have lined a hood."—He then proceeds to condemn the pride of the lower claſſes of the people, for imitating the faſhions and extravagances of the rich; "and certainly," ſays he, "the *great lords* are to blame, if I dare ſay ſo much, to permit their dependants to imitate them in their dreſs. In former time, perſons of rank were known by their apparel; but, at preſent, it is very difficult to diſtinguiſh the nobleman from one of low degree." He then conſiders the "foule waſte of cloth" attendant upon theſe luxurious faſhions, and aſſures us, that no leſs than a yard of broad cloth was expended for one man's tippet. Returning to his former argument, that noblemen ought not to encourage their ſervants in the uſage of ſuch extravagant dreſſes, he ſays, "If the maſter ſhould ſtumble as he walks, how can his ſervant afford him any aſſiſtance, while both his hands have full employment in holding up the long ſleeves with which his arms are encumbered?" He then adds, that "the taylors muſt ſoon ſhape their garments in the open field, for want of room to cut them in their own houſes; becauſe that man is beſt reſpected who bears upon his back, at one time, the greateſt quantity of cloth and of fur."

They are thus deſcribed by another author: "*Maxime togatorum cum profundis et lati, manicis, vocatis vulgariter* pokys, *ad modum* bagpipe *formatis:* Wearing gowns with deep wide ſleeves, commonly called *pokys*, ſhaped like a *bagpipe*, and worn indifferently both by ſervants and maſters. They are alſo rightly denominated Devils' receptacles, *receptacula demoniorum rectè dici;* for, whatever could be ſtolen, was popped into them. Some were ſo long and wide that they reached to the feet, others to the knees, and were full of ſlits. As the ſervants were bringing up pottage and ſauces, or any other liquors, thoſe ſleeves would go into them, and have the firſt taſte. And all that they could procure was ſpent to clothe their uncurable carcaſes with

thoſe

thoſe *pokys* or *ſleeves*, while the reſt of their habit was ſhort."

From the following obſervation the reader may, perchance, ſuſpect the reformiſt of loving his belly more than his back: "In days of old," ſays he, "when men were clad in a more ſimple manner, there was abundance of good eating; but now they clothe themſelves in ſuch an expenſive manner, that the former hoſpitality is baniſhed from their houſes." He then laments, "that a nobleman cannot adopt a new guiſe, or faſhion, but that a knave will follow his example;" and, ſpeaking in commendation of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaſter, he inform us, that "his garments were not too wide, and yet they became him wondrouſly well." "Now, would to God!" continues he, "this waſte of cloth and pride were exiled from us for ever; for, now we have little need of brooms in the land to ſweep away the filth from the ſtreet, becauſe the ſide ſleeves of pennyleſs grooms will gather it up, if it ſhould be either wet or dry." He then addreſſes himſelf, by apoſtrophe, to his country, and adviſes a reformation of all theſe abuſes: His ſatirical concluſion, however, I hope, is inapplicable to any time but his own. "If," ſays he, "a man of abilities, meanly clad, ſhould ſeek acceſs to the preſence of a nobleman, he would be denied on the account of his clothing; but, on the contrary, a man who, by flattery and the meaneſt ſervility, can procure himſelf the moſt faſhionable apparel, he ſhall be received with great honour."

REMARKS *on* BURYING *the* DEAD *in* WOOLLEN-STUFFS.

THE law which eſtabliſhed this practice is generally believed to have been enacted ſolely with the view to promote the ſtaple manufacture of this country. Another beneficial conſequence, however, flows from it, which is of great importance, eſpecially at the preſent time, when the price of paper and of books is become ſo enormouſly high. For it appears that, by the prohibition to clothe the bodies of the dead in linen, at leaſt two hundred thouſand pounds of rags are annually ſaved from untimely corruption in the grave, and in due time paſs into the hands of the manufacturer of paper.

Deſcription of the River Tamar and its Scenery.

[From the Rev. Mr. Gilpin's Obſervations on the Weſtern Parts of England.]

THE Hamoaz is eſteemed, after Portſmouth, the beſt ſtation for ſhips of war upon the Britiſh coaſt. This grand bay, which was the firſt ſcene we inveſtigated on the Tamar, is about a mile in breadth, and ſeven miles in length. Its banks on each ſide, though rather low, are by no means flat. They are generally cultivated; and the ſhore is finiſhed by a narrow edging of rock. The opening towards St. German's is a creek about three leagues in length. Saltaſh, which ſtands high, affords no very picturesque appearance. The next ſcene was the opening of the Tavey into the Tamar. The firſt ſcene, which in any degree engaged our attention, was compoſed of the woods of Pentilley on the Corniſh ſide. The houſe, too, is a good object; and a building at the bottom of the bank has a picturesque appearance. The back ground of the ſcenery of Pentilley is a lofty bank, adorned with a tower.

As we ſailed farther up the river, we came in view of the rocks and woods of Cotoil, which are ſtill on the Corniſh ſide, and afford ſome beautiful ſcenery. Here we had grand ſweeping hills covered with wood. We had now ſailed a conſiderable way up the Tamar, and had been almoſt ſolely obliged to the Corniſh ſhores for amuſement. But the Devonſhire coaſt burſt out upon us at Calſtock, in a grander diſplay of lofty banks, adorned with wood and rock, than any we have yet ſeen. With the views of Calſtock we finiſhed our voyage up the river; and if aſked what we ſaw, we can only ſay, in general, that we ſaw rocks, trees, groves, and woods. In ſhort the whole is amuſing, but not picturesque: it is not ſufficiently divided into portions adapted to the pencil.

A REBUS, *by P. Gove, of Exeter.*

WHAT ſcenes of woe! what dire alarms!
Throughout the globe are ſpread,
When that my brazen firſt reſounds,
And lifts its hydra head.

Fill'd with my next the widow view
So mournful and forlorn!
The partner of her life is ſlain,
Her orphan children mourn.

Now view the field, th' enſanguin'd field,
Convuls'd with martial ſtrife;
Behold my third the warrior wields,
Stain'd with the tide of life.

My fourth calls the young hero forth,
He leaves his peaceful home,
For arduous and diſtreſſing toil,
O'er foreign lands to roam.

Fir'd with my next he ruſhes forth,
And boldly meets the foe;
Nor death, nor danger does he ſhun,
Or ſcenes full fraught with woe.

But when my next doth over ſpread
The dire, the bloody plain,
Hoſtilities in general ceaſe
During its fable reign.

And when the dreadful fight is won,
My next the victors crown;
Th' intrepid feats that they have done
From every mouth reſound.

But ſad reverſe the vanquiſh'd feel,
For with my next they're fill'd;
And in confuſion and diſmay
They fly the fated field.

'Tis then my lovely next appears,
And to the conquerors ſent,
With humble ſupplicating terms
To meet with their conſent.

And may my laſt, who now contend,
Be brought to terms of peace!
Then thoſe dire ſcenes will have an end,
And all contentions ceaſe.

My ſapient whole will ſoon appear,
When you've the initials join'd;
He was belov'd, eſteem'd, rever'd—
The friend of all mankind.

POETRY.

For the WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

ALFONSO *and* ZARA.

Written by ELIAS VIVIAN DUNSTERVILLE, *of Plymouth, and Author of the Village of Eſticorn.*

NEAR the banks of the Thames ſtood a neat humble cot,
By a willow that ſpread itſelf high,
An ivy grew round it, and quick by its ſide
The murmuring waters return'd with the tide,
Join the river, and gently flow by.

The cot was of mud, and the willow adorn'd
The avenue ent'ring the door;
But all mortals had flown it, and e'en to this day,
The traveller chancing to wander that way,
Sees the blood which is ſtain'd on the floor!

The man who poſſeſs'd it, as ſtories have told,
Was a warrior, and ſome ſay a knight;
He was called Alfonſo, and great was his fame,
For the fields of old Scotland with joy hail the name,
When he us'd for his country to fight.

In a caſtle not far from a wood which is near,
Dwelt a lord who was noble to view;
A daughter he had, who all virgins excell'd,
Alfonſo ſhe lov'd, who with grief was impell'd,
To fly to this cot, which he knew.

And oft would he go to viſit the one,
Who poſſeſs'd both his love and his heart:
But her father was raſh, and loudly he ſwore,
That Alfonſo ſhe never, ſhould never ſee more,
But take leave, and for ever to part.

It was death to his daughter, who held him ſo high,
That all ſhe would give for her dear;
And oft to her window Alfonſo would fly,
And ſwear for his Zara he ready would die,
And not e'en for torments would fear.

It happen'd one eve, when the moon ſhone ſo bright,
That his journey had ſcarcely begun,
When as over the wood he mournfully ſtray'd,
A warrior he ſaw, who in armour array'd,
Bent his courſe, when the bell toll'd out one.

Behind

Behind the great willow he haſtily ran,
While the ſtranger came on on his rear;
When, Oh God! what he felt, when quickly he found
The warrior he ſaw, as he turned atound,
Was the father of her he held dear.

On finding the door was lock'd, and within
Burſt the door, and began thus to call:
"The coward is gone, Alfonſo is fled;
"I ſwear I myſelf would rather be dead,
"Than let my intentions thus fall.

"You never can marry, my daughter is dead,
"I myſelf ſtabb'd, and ſaw her to die;
"I vow'd you ſhould never my Zara ſee more,
"She welters in blood, for ſacred I ſwore,
"Did ſhe marry, to ſee her laſt ſigh."

His dagger he aim'd at his heart, and exclaim'd,
"Ah Zara! I mourn thy ſad doom!"
With a blow that was mighty it entered his ſide,
He ſunk on the earth, and expiring cry'd,
"Ah Zara! cut off in thy bloom."

Alfonſo ruſh'd in, and the dagger he took,
Swore with Zara he never would part;
Then like lightning he flew up the wood's thorny way,
Oh God! think how full both of fear and diſmay,
When he ſaw her, and ſtabb'd to the heart.

He fell in a ſwoon on her pale bleeding corpſe,
Crying, "Zara, ſtill your's do I die:
"Thy father ſo cruel has not murder'd me,
"Oh! would that he had, that I might die with thee,
"And be bleſt in the kingdom on high.

"I cannot ſurvive thee; I now ſtrike a blow,
"Which ſhall bring me a reptile to thee."
Then lifting the weapon, he plung'd it ſo far,
That he fell, and his loſs was lamented by far,
And check'd all the neighbouring glee.

The willow droop'd down, and ſoon fell to nought,
By the ſtream it was waſh'd in the main;
But a ſhoot of the old one aroſe, and in turn
Drooping down as it does, and beginning to mourn
The loſs of ſo noble a ſwain.

[The author begs leave to ſay, that in his laſt production, "The Village of Ellicorn," the name *Lucretia* was printed inſtead of *Clariſſa*, owing to his careleſsneſs.]

EPIGRAM *to a* SLOVEN.

I Met you t'other day, 'tis true,
And paſs'd you, dirty dog!
Your face quite clean, and linen too!
I thought you were *incog.*